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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 001613

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PNAT](#) [KDEM](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: COR RANK AND FILE GRUMBLE OVER GOVERNMENT FORMATION

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ROBERT S. FORD, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B)  
AND (D).

¶1. (C) Summary. While their party leaders talked in more restricted settings, in May 14 conversations with PolOffs, a number of Council of Representatives (CoR) rank and file members expressed dissatisfaction with the ministerial positions they understood PM-designate Maliki had offered to their parties/blocs. The CoR Chaldean Democratic Union Party leader complained about what he viewed as Kurdish double-dipping in putting forward Christian Kurd Fawzi Hariri for a ministerial position. Iraqiyya members claimed to reject what they understood to be their bloc's ministerial package. Inside the Shia Coalition, Fadhila Party members continued to gripe about the oil ministry.  
END SUMMARY

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Chaldo-Assyrian: Christian Kurd Doesn't Represent other Christians  
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¶2. (C) Chaldean Democratic Union Party leader and CoR member Abalhad Sawa (Kurdish List) told Poloff on May 14 that he opposed the nomination of Fawzi Hariri to any ministerial post as the "Christian" minister. Sawa said that if the Christians were allocated a ministerial position, it should be up to Christian leaders like himself and Assyrian Democratic Movement leader and CoR member Yonadam Kanna to make the nomination. Though Sawa won his seat on the Kurdish list, he opposed the notion that the Christian ministerial nominee should come from that bloc, even if the position came from the Kurdish ministerial quota. He told Poloff that he has not discussed his views with Kanna, since Kanna has refused to work with him since Sawa decided to run for the CoR on the Kurdish list.

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Iraqiyya's Dissatisfaction  
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¶3. (C) Iraqiyya List CoR member Safia Suhail told Poloff on May 14 that Ayad Allawi had asked her to pick which ministry she wanted from the ones allocated to Iraqiyya but she had rejected them all. Suhail said she wanted nothing less than to be a PM Assistant in charge of service and other non-economic/security ministries. She argued that a woman must have a seat among the senior political leaders in the Iraqi government. She also said that Allawi will nominate Saad al-Janabi for the post of Communications Minister. (Note: In fact we understand Allawi has proposed his cousin Muhhamad Allawi. End note.) In a May 14 conversation, negotiating committee member Shaikh Hussein al-Sha'alan claimed that Iraqiyya had unanimously refused what the Shia Coalition offered, which he listed as justice, human rights, communications, science and technology. (Note: Sha'alan made no mention of the highly

sought-after trade ministry as part of the package. End Note) Following the May 14 CoR session, Hussam al-Azzawi told PolFSN that Iraqiyya will continue to push for the ministry of defense and if they do not get any key ministries, they will consider withdrawing from the negotiations.

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A SCIRI Point of View  
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¶4. (C) In a May 14 conversation with PolOff, SCIRI politburo member and CoR member Ridha Jawad Taki said that a national unity government was necessary because it was the Marjaiya's will. He said that efforts to put such a government together are complicated because the Sunni Arabs change their position regularly. For example, Taki said, Tawafuq's leaders originally wanted the Ministries of Planning and Higher Education, but changed their minds and are now demanding the Ministries of Finance and Education. Negotiations will continue, Taki argued, but he said he feared that nobody will be fully satisfied with the ministries they get.

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Fadhila Fixated on Oil  
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¶5. (C) SCIRI politburo member Ridha Taki, May 14, told PolOff that Fadhila Party's withdrawal from cabinet formation talks is mere grandstanding. He said the Fadhila Party is simply taking an extreme position to try to secure the Ministry of Oil. (NOTE: Fadhila policy leader Hassan al-Shemmeri repeated to PolFSN May 14 that the party would

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return to the negotiating table if offered the oil ministry.) However, Taki predicted that the ministry of oil will go to Shia Independent Hussein Shahrastani. Taki said Thamer Ghadban would be a better Minister of Oil, but said that it would be impossible to get all parties in the UIC 555 to agree to his nomination. Shahrastani, Taki stressed, is a better candidate than anyone in the Fadhila Party.

¶6. (C) Dagher Jasim of Sayed al-Shuhada, which is part of SCIRI, told PolOff on May 14 that no decision has been made about who in UIC 555 will control the various ministries. He said that first, it must be decided which ministries UIC 555 will control, and then the parties in the Shia Coalition will negotiate which parties will get which ministries. He predicted, however, that SCIRI will control the Ministries of Public Works and Finance, Hussein Shahrastani will be Minister of Oil, Dawa Tanzim will get the Ministry of Education, and Tawafuq will get the Ministry of Higher Education.

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Dissatisfied Tawafuq Member Wants Government to Fail  
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¶7. (C) In a May 14 conversation with PolFSN, Tawafuq member Dhafir al-Ani accused the Shia Coalition of keeping Tawafuq away from revenue-producing ministries. Al-Ani proposed that each minister have four deputy ministers representing the four major blocs. He added that Tawafuq is so fragile that he is considering leaving the bloc to establish a large Sunni Arab bloc that will hinder government formation in the hopes that al-Maliki will fail and a new government can be formed.

¶8. (C) COMMENT: The Iraqi individuals cited above are not the lead participants in government formation negotiations. Their comments, however, reflect the fluidity of the discussion on many key positions. The comments also reflect pressures party leaders are under from rank and

file party members with regard to inter and intra-bloc negotiations over distribution of ministerial positions. We can expect such partisan pressures to continue throughout the government formation process and thereafter as a new government of national unity moves forward to confront key policy challenges.

KHALILZAD